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NOTES ON

SUMMER SCHOOL.

DESEDERIUS ERASMUS.

MIAMI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, SUMMER SCHOOL 1905.

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The Summer Session

.. AT ..

Miami University.

ENROLLMENT. The enrollment was not only the largest in the history of the institution, but contains the largest percent of men and by far the largest number of students and teachers pursuing courses, leading to diplomas and degrees.

The following is a summary:—

Total enrollment	519
I. Number having High School Education	308
II. Number taking credit courses	390
III. Number having had experience as teachers	344
a. Having had one year's experience	105
b. Having had two years' experience	66
c. Having had three years' experience	36
d. Having had more than 3 years'	137

Hepburn Hall afforded the ladies of the Summer School the most comfortable dormitory home in Ohio.

The conference of Superintendents and Principals a most important feature.

The sense of the conference was definitely expressed upon a large number of topics prominent among which are:

That English should be a required study throughout the High School.

That laboratory and experimental work in the High School

should be simple and related to the pupil's experience.

That the lecture method as used in the colleges is not adaptable to instruction in High Schools.

That two years of *required* mathematics is sufficient in a High School curriculum.

That two years of language other than English should be required in three year and four year High Schools and that there should be four recitation periods a week.

That the change of method of instruction is too marked between the Elementary School and the High School.

That professional training should have State recognition by special certificates or advanced salaries.

Prof Wilbur Jacksman of Chicago defended the Elementary School course and method of instruction of the Chicago School of Education under the most vigorous questioning of the conference.

Prof. Jackman gave as a proof of the efficiency of the plan pursued in the Elementary Schools of the School of Education that the pupils from these schools were given a year of advanced standing in the High School over those who came into the same High School from other Elementary Schools.

ERASMUS

Two great results grew out of the writing of Erasmus: namely a spiritual revival of the classics and the Reformation. The former was the purpose and aim of his life: the latter rather a necessary consequent complement of his writings.

His name was a combination of classic words, one Latin the other Greek; the former Desederius, the latter Erasmus both signifying beloved, the meaning of the Dutch word, Gerard, which was his real name.

But being born of a celibate monk who never exercised care or protection over him Erasmus doubtless felt perfect liberty to make his own name and his classic choice shows the early bent of his taste.

Although born into adverse circumstances, no confirmed marriage ever having occured between his father and mother, and his mother having died while he was a mere lad, he was yet born at a good time for his work.

The printing press was coming into general practical use; the classic scholars of Constantinople, were scattering themselves over western Europe, having been driven out of their native city by the invasion of the Turks; and Luther was ready to follow up outside of the church what Erasmus had begun within the church.

The work of Erasmus must be considered in its indirect rather than in its direct bearing upon education. He was only an educational reformer in so much as he was a reformer of the church under the auspices of which all the educational institutions of the times were conducted.

A brief survey of his life and leading characteristics may be expedient to a clear understanding of his various attitudes toward the church and the Reformation. Born of a hardy stock (Dutch,) yet he was physically delicately constituted, and, like Dickens, from his very earliest selfconsciousness he seems to have been aware that he was born to some great human destiny. He entered the college of Deventer Holland, in 1476 at the age

of nine, and if this college belonging to the Jeromites, Bretheren of the Common Life, had done no more than given the early training to Erasmus it would deserve prominent mention in the history of Education. Here he was taught Latin, and is said to have committed the whole of both Horace and Terrence. He received here also some instruction in Greek from a teacher who had studied with the restorer of learning in Germany, Rudolph Agricola. Agricola himself while visiting the Deventer college looked over the composition of Erasmus; so impressed was he with its purity and excellence that he said to Erasmus "You will some day become a great man." Whether this was the cause of his greatness, or whether it was composed by his posthumous biographers as fitting, or whether either of the suppositions is true, doth not appear.

While here his mother died followed soon by his father, the latter event I rather regard as helpful to Erasmus, for the very knowledge of having a father whom he could not own must of itself have been humiliating to a sensitive nature like that of Erasmus.

After the death of his mother he was returned to Deventer where, as he says, he "lost two years" in going over what he already knew better than his teachers.

His guardians had by this time dissipated all his father's property and urged upon him to enter a convent. To this end they, and the priests and bishops who now saw a great future churchman in Erasmus, labored and devised.

He protested and refused but was finally persuaded by an old college fellow of Deventer, to enter with him the convent of Steyn and to accept the cowl.

Here he persistently pursued the study of Latin, Juvenal, Ovid, and Virgil acquiring that grace and elegance of expression in the Latin tongue which so characterized his writings in later years. Here he wrote a defence of the classics. When he was twenty four years old the Bishop of Cambray asked the Pope to give him Erasmus as secretary, this delivers Erasmus from the convent.

He went to Paris to study and here was reduced for support to tutoring private classes. This was the beginning of his good fortune for among his pupils were English sons of nobility, particularly, William Blount, later Lord Mountjoy, through whom he was introduced to John Collet, founder of St. Paul School, Sir

Thomas More who became the Lord Chancellor of England, and other men of first rank in England. The wife of Lord Mountjoy became a devotee to the cause of Erasmus and gave him large sums of money.

The learning of Erasmus made a favorable and lasting impression on the English. When at a banquet at Oxford at which many of the learned men of England had gathered, the question of "Cain's rejection" arose the discussion grew intense. Erasmus arose and gave impromptu a vision which he imagines himself to have had. Such was his display of biblical information and the elegance of his style that he at once took rank in England as a scholar of first merit.

Later he took the degree of B. D. at Cambridge and D. D. at Bologna. He continued to make the acquaintance and secure the friendship of the greatest potentates in Europe. Whether he foresaw this necessity of their goodwill for his own protection is not for this paper to discuss; but this protection he did use when the entire priesthood was smarting under his relentless lash of satire upon their practices.

He was always in need of money and used his wealthy friends to good purpose. Henry VIII through Arch Bishop Warham gave him a 20 pound pension and Emperor Charles V. gave him a 200 florin benefit as one of his councillors.

After his first visit to England he returned to Paris and there wrote one of his characteristic letters asking for money. In such a letter he usually began by very modestly enumerating his misfortunes, the general parsimony of some of his friends, his urgent needs, but before the letter has closed he has asked for an exact amount and without stint has urged an immediate remittance. A quotation from a letter to Battins whom he desires to plead with Lord Mountjoy's wife in his behalf will illustrate: "She has plenty to give for the keeps of those villainous cowled black-guards—you know whom I mean—and she has nothing to maintain the independence of one who might write books worthy of immortality if I may make that small boast about myself. Point out how much more honor I shall bring my lady by my learning than the other divines whom she maintains: for they deliver vulgar harangues while my writings will live forever; they with their ignorant platitudes are listened to in one or two churches while my books will be read by the Greeks, by the Latins, ay by every nation throughout the wide world. I am a ware that there are many applicants for livings, but you can

say that I am the only man if she compares with all others, you know how you have been accustomed to lie profusely for Erasmus." His scruples were not highly sensitive, as he says he had no desire to be a martyr for truth.

As a reformer he is not to be regarded as a controversialist. He simply wrote his books and allowed the people to read and make their own conclusions. Like Emerson he was always kindling the flames but was never found at the fire. Froude says "Erasmus laid the egg of the Reformation and Luther hatched it." Now who is the mother of the Reformation is still debatable. A little strange and yet philosophically natural enough too, the hen that laid the egg looked with disdain upon the hen that was to become the incubator, and maternal adviser of the offspring. Many of his books took the negative form, protesting against the practices of the church; against the ignorance of those who set themselves up as teachers; and against the manner of education. He is the recognized scholar of his age and all his utterances have great weight. He discourses upon nearly all subjects, writing grammars, dictionaries and colloquies, translating the new testament with commentaries, compiling codes of etiquette and methods of instruction.

His first widely read publication was "Moria" an exaltation of Folly. He shows how all classes of men bow down at the shrine of Folly; but takes especial delight in pouring forth in torrents upon the irritable priests his inimitable derision (irritating ashes, hot cinders and lava.)

His colloquies did probably the most to bring into ridicule many of the prevailing fallacies. The colloquies were written in such easy latin that they were used in the schools as text books in reading. It was the style alone that recommended their use as the matter contained therein was not adapted to the youth. He shows in the "Colloquy Religious Pilgrimage," how the credulity of the people is imposed upon by evil parties in the church. He brings ingeniously into ridicule the genuineness of the Savior's blood, the Virgin's milk and other articles which he says churches exhibited to their several parishioners and visitors as heirlooms of the church preserved from the days of Christ.

In the "Abbot and the Learned Woman," he gives a picture of an ignorant abbot. The woman asks the abbot who complained against her for reading books and says he has not time for wisdom: "'Have you no time you say, to apply yourself to

wisdom?' Ab. 'No not a single minute'. W. 'Pray what hinders you if a body may ask the question?' 'Ab. Why you must know we have devlish long prayers; and by that time I have looked over my charge, my horses, my dogs and my court, I have not a moment left to spare.' "

Speaking of fasts he says "Fasting often ministers to luxuries and there are no days on which the kitchens are busier or the expenses greater than the fast days. Thus it happens that the poor starve while the rich live more delicately than usual. For who would not rather have sturgeon, or trout or lamprey than smoked ham or leg of mutton."

Such satire in his colloquies and other writings such as "Julius Exclusus" at the gate of heaven endeavoring to force St. Peter to admit him because he had had great papal powers and had accomplished great worldly achievements, brought the practices of the church into ridicule which finally led to the Reformation.

Erasmus wrote also "Of the First Liberal Education" which covered almost the entire field of education. He says it is as natural for a child to learn as it is for a beast to go, or a bird to fly, or a fish to swim. He comprehended the education of very young children reaching even below the age of five somewhat anticipating Kindergarten work. While his educational ideas have never been systematized, yet his general enthusiasm for a deeper culture and better methods of instruction has continued his influence even to our present systems.

In his tract, "Education of Youth," he speaks against the rigidity of French school masters. "You may kill some (children) before you can make them one whit better by beating: and yet with good words and good usage, you may do what you please with them. Of this temper I own myself to have been when a boy, and my master, of whom I was a great favorite because he was pleased to have conceived great hopes of me, having a mind to get a thorough knowledge of my disposition, did therefore make a trial how I could bear a sound whipping. Upon this a fault was cooked up of which (God knows) I never so much as dreamed; and accordingly I suffered the discipline of the school. Immediately I lost all manner of relish to my studies; and this usage did so damp my spirit that it almost broke my heart. From this we see that these illiterate butchers, (to give them no better term) ruin many a hopeful lad. * * * They are, indeed, fitter for the business of butcher, or hangman, than to be

instructors of youth, and it is an observation not ill grounded that the most ignorant schoolmasters are generally best at this exercise.

His "when I have money I will first buy Greek books and then clothes" comes to the student with refreshing stimulus, and his "we learn with willingness from those we love," continues to reconstruct the attitude of teacher toward pupil.

From 1521 until his death in 1535, his life was spent at Basle near the famous printing press of Froben.

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